

Using Geophysics to Locate a Buried Tanker

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Criminal Investigation Division received information that an 8,000-gallon tanker trailer that possibly contained hazardous waste was buried on a commercial property. The NEIC staff, Kerita Kegler and Carrie Middleton, collaborated with Region 5 geophysical experts, Mark Vendl and Jim Ursic, to find, unearth, and sample the buried tanker. Using global positioning system (GPS) mapping technology, geophysical survey with magnetometry, data processing of geophysical anomalies, and contractor-operated heavy equipment, the 8,000-gallon tanker was found, unearthed, and sampled. The collaboration of the NEIC with Region 5 resulted in the tanker being found and unearthed safely without a great deal of damage to the property. Without the collaborative efforts of the NEIC and Region 5, the discovery and unearthing of the tanker may not have occurred without excessive property damage, safety risks, and high cost.